

# ecoNews — Wire —

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

May 30, 2003

For immediate release

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## **DNR ISSUES FIRST ANIMAL FEEDING PERMITS UNDER MASTER MATRIX**

DES MOINES — The DNR issued the first three draft construction permits for animal feeding operations May 21 using the master matrix, a way to consider environmental and social factors when siting large permitted confinement feeding operations.

The master matrix requires producers in 87 participating counties to meet more stringent requirements than state law normally requires when applying for a construction permit for a confinement feeding operation.

“The county board of supervisors reviewed and approved each of the three construction permit applications and the master matrix submitted by the producers,” said Reza Khosravi, acting supervisor of the DNR animal feeding operations. “These counties have the right to object to the draft permit if they act within 14 days,” he added.

The draft permits were issued to the following producers:

- Treloar Farms in Chickasaw County,
- Smith Finishing in Louisa County, and
- Wohlford – Vine Site in Franklin County.

The DNR also reviewed the applications and they meet all the requirements of state law.

A fourth and final permit was issued to V. M. Pork in Mahaska County on May 21. The county has lost its right to appeal because it did not review the application within 30 days after receiving the application.

Once a participating county chooses not to review a construction permit application, they lose the right to appeal or to use the master matrix on additional applications for the rest of the year, Khosravi said.

If the county board decides to review construction permit applications next year, then it will need to file a resolution with the DNR in January 2004.

County boards can find assistance for reviewing construction permits on the DNR website at [www.iowadnr.com](http://www.iowadnr.com) or by contacting a DNR permit engineer at 515-281-8941.

To use the master matrix, a producer must earn one-half of the total points (440 points) and 25 percent of the available points in each subcategory of air quality, water quality and community impact. The producer can gain points by choosing a location far from neighbors and sensitive areas, or by choosing to use best management practices or install structures when building a facility.

“Each producer is choosing different items, but all the applications we’ve received so far have chosen to use a watering and feeding system that reduces manure production and to cover the manure by using under-the-floor pits,” Khosravi said.

**For more information, contact Wayne Gieselman at 515-281-5817 or at [wayne.gieselman@dnr.state.ia.us](mailto:wayne.gieselman@dnr.state.ia.us).**

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## **BEACH REMAINS POSTED AT LAKE GEODE; BACKBONE BEACH REMAINS CLOSED**

DES MOINES — A swimming advisory remains in place at the Lake Geode beach in Henry County for the next two weeks and the beach at Backbone State Park in Delaware County remains closed.

A high reading was also recorded at Springbrook State Park in Guthrie County last week, but the beach was re-sampled and this week’s results show bacteria numbers at acceptable levels.

The beach at Lake Geode had an E. coli bacteria reading of 370. That beach now exceeds the standard for a geometric mean of 126 comprised of five samples over a 30 day period and will not be able to return an acceptable geometric mean for at least two weeks. The DNR will be conducting additional testing in the Lake Geode watershed next week to see if potential bacteria sources can be identified.

The beach at Backbone had a reading of 90 this week and will remain closed while the DNR continues to investigate the wastewater treatment plant at Strawberry Point for alleged violations of its discharge permit. The department is investigating whether effluent from the plant is receiving adequate treatment prior to being discharged into a

stream flowing to the Maquoketa River. Backbone Lake, an impoundment of the river, is located between three and four miles downstream from where wastewater treatment plant in Strawberry Point discharges.

Bacteria levels at Iowa's 31 other state park beaches are within acceptable levels.

Weekly beach monitoring results are posted on the DNR's website every Friday afternoon at <http://iowadnr.com/news/beach.html>.

**For more information, contact Kevin Baskins at (515) 281-8395 or Mary Skopec, 319-335-1575.**

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## **DNR OFFERS FREE WORKSHOPS ON SUSTAINABLE BUILDING DESIGN FOR SCHOOLS IN CEDAR FALLS AND VEDIC CITY**

DES MOINES — The Department of Natural Resources will conduct workshops on sustainable building design in schools June 12 and 13 in Cedar Falls and in Maharishi Vedic City.

The free one-day conferences, presented by the Iowa Sustainable Design Initiative and the Iowa Energy Bank Program, are designed to help school administrators and building personnel understand the reduced operating and maintenance costs and improved student and employee performance resulting from high-performance "green buildings."

Merry Rankin, project lead for sustainable design at the DNR, said many administrators involved in facilities planning aren't fully aware of the opportunities and benefits associated with sustainable design.

"We all understand intuitively that good physical facilities enhance the school experience for students, faculty and staff," Rankin said. "But well-designed buildings have been shown to have a measurable effect on student performance. That's a value that cannot be overestimated."

Studies from various parts of the country indicate a significant potential for student performance improvement in buildings using green principles. For example, students in the District of Columbia attending school in poorly conditioned buildings scored 11 percent lower on achievement tests than students in buildings of excellent condition.

In Orange County, California, students in rooms with plenty of natural daylight progressed 20 percent faster on math tests and 26 percent faster on reading tests than students in rooms with little or no daylight. In addition, students in rooms where the windows could be opened progressed 8 percent faster than students in rooms with fixed windows, even where air conditioning was available

Specific objectives of the workshops include:

- Understand green building and energy efficiency principles and strategies
- Benefit from increased savings, improved infrastructure and enhanced comfort
- Utilize renewable energy technologies and applications
- Take advantage of state and national incentives and resources for green building and energy efficiency construction and renovation

Workshop dates and times are as follows:

June 12 — Center for Energy and Environmental Education, Cedar Falls (8 a.m. to 5 p.m.). Presented by the Iowa Energy Bank Program and the Iowa Sustainable Design Initiative.

June 13 — Raj Hotel, Maharishi Vedic City (9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.). Presented by the Iowa Sustainable Design Initiative.

Attendees will receive 7.5 CEUs for the June 12 conference, and 4.0 CEUs for the June 13 conference. Funding is provided through a grant from the Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) program. For more information, visit [www.sustainableiowa.org](http://www.sustainableiowa.org), or [www.iowadnr.com](http://www.iowadnr.com).

Those wishing to attend a conference should contact Merry Rankin at (515) 281-8263, e-mail [merry.rankin@dnr.state.ia.us](mailto:merry.rankin@dnr.state.ia.us); or Jeff Geerts at (515) 281-8176, e-mail [jeff.geerts@dnr.state.ia.us](mailto:jeff.geerts@dnr.state.ia.us).

**For more information, contact Bob Castelline at (515) 281-0879, or by e-mail at [bob.castelline@dnr.state.ia.us](mailto:bob.castelline@dnr.state.ia.us).**